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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

December 10, 2015

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### **City of Champaign Responds to Media Inquiries Regarding Police Officer's Use of Force**

On December 1, 2015, the Champaign City Council approved a \$25,000 settlement claim with William Brown (case no. 2:12-cv-02324), regarding a use of force litigation against two Champaign Police officers. Since the settlement agreement was approved, the Champaign Police Department has received multiple media inquiries regarding the Police Department's Use of Force Policy and the City's litigation process. In addition, several Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been submitted regarding Police Officer Matt Rush, who is identified as one of the officers involved in the aforementioned case, as well as two other pending cases (Mann and Seets).

Due to media inquiries, FOIA requests, and in keeping with the City's commitment to transparency, the following information is being released to the public:

- City of Champaign Litigation/Case Summaries
- Personnel File Documents (as required by state law)
- Internal and Citizen Complaint Investigations
- Police Chief's Disciplinary Decision to Terminate
- City Manager's Denial of Employee Grievance
- Arbitrator's Decision Reducing Discipline
- Media Requested Videos
- Related Policies and Information

These documents include internal investigations, citizen complaints, as well as pending litigation regarding Officer Matt Rush. These investigations ultimately led to Police Chief Anthony Cobb's decision to terminate Rush's employment. As allowed by the City's collective bargaining agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police, Officer Rush challenged his dismissal and exercised his arbitration rights. In a final and binding decision, the arbitrator set aside the employee discharge and reduced the discipline to three separate suspensions, a 1-day, a 3-day and a 30-day suspension. Upon Officer Rush's return to duty, he received additional training and has been subject to increased supervision.

"We care about each encounter with our citizens and take every use of force incident seriously," states Police Chief Anthony Cobb. "We review every use of force incident; we do not wait to receive a complaint to address them.

There's no doubt that police work is a tough profession, but our Department is filled with professional officers who are dedicated to protecting the safety and rights of our citizens. It's important to recognize them for their sacrifices, yet it is crucial to justly evaluate when actions are not consistent with our Department policies and the City's values."

The City recognizes that the public may have interest in this matter. All of the reports, videos, FOIAs, and other materials related to these incidents have been made available for public review on the City's website at [champaignpolice.com/FOIA-Response](http://champaignpolice.com/FOIA-Response).